

IN THE STARS

What Houses In Your Birth Chart Mean and How to Find Them

This beginner's guide to the Houses will help you dive just a little bit deeper into your astrological chart — or someone else's, with their permission.

BY ALIZA KELLY

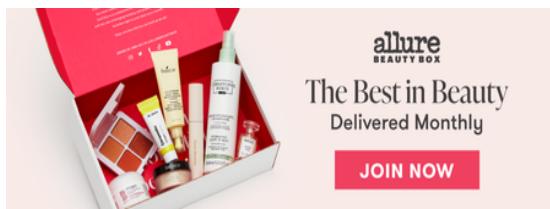
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The Astrological Houses

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If you've ever had your chart read or hung out with astrology nerds, you've likely heard about the **Twelve Houses**. For many of us, **horoscopes** are the gateway into greater astrological curiosity. As we begin following them, we become more familiar with — and interested in — the many moving pieces of **our birth charts**. You've likely heard about signs and planets, for instance, but what the hell is a House?



Each planet, asteroid, or celestial point exists within a House, and that placement offers invaluable insight not just about your own personality, but also how you coexist with the world around you. Moreover, the Houses are a roadmap for understanding your past, present, and future. As the planets in the sky move across these domains, different events — both tangible and emotional — are triggered. Each house is associated with a different sign. For instance, the Seventh House of Partnership is associated with Libra energy: Libra is the sign of relationships and is all about balance, love, and fairness, so it makes sense that it corresponds with partnerships.

The birth chart is a snapshot of the sky at your moment of birth.

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If this all sounds rather extraordinary, well, it is. The Houses are truly what makes astrology so spectacular. Each one signifies a component of life, but none of these subsections exist within a silo: The Twelve Houses also operate as a single unit, a collective that comprises the entire 360-degree wheel. Their geometric rhythm is a symbolic representation of an individual's complete cosmology. To understand the meaning of the Houses in your own life, calculate your birth chart by simply plugging your time, date, and location of birth into astrology software, like what [Astro.com offers](#), and follow along below.

What are the Houses in astrology?

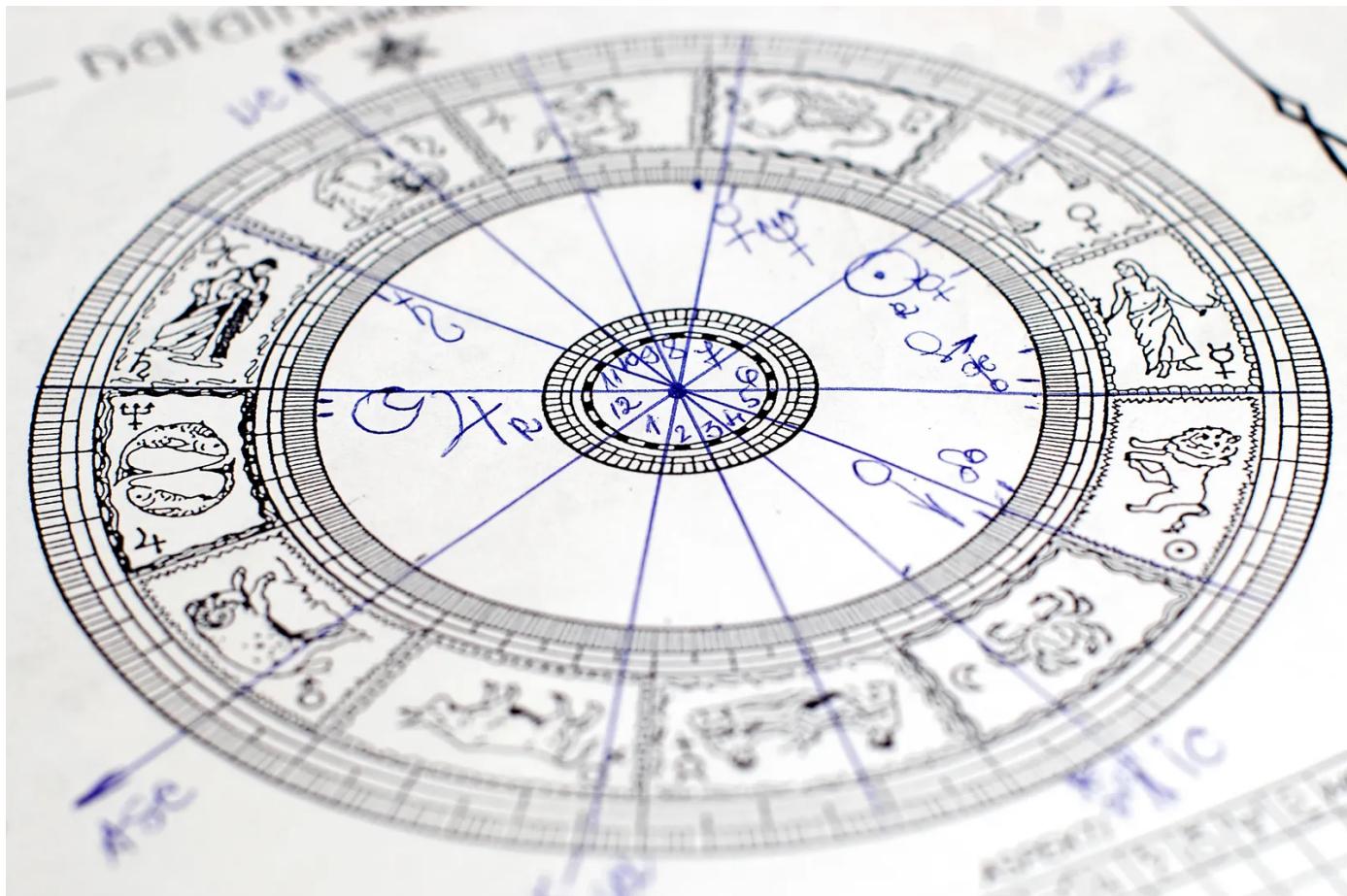
The birth chart is divided into 12 equal sections, which comprise the Houses. The number 12 surfaces often in astrology — after all, it's [a perfect numerical](#). However, do not get confused, as the Houses are *not* the same as the zodiac wheel, which is based on the sun's yearly rotational movement. Instead, the Houses reflect the earth's own 24-hour rotation around its axis. Accordingly, when reading a birth chart, astrologers fuse these two systems together. Since the Houses rotate every 24 hours, it is *essential* to use your correct time of birth when calculating your chart. Each house represents two hours of the sun's apparent movement each day. So when you get your crush's birth time, make sure it's correct!

Why is that a big deal? "The Houses in an astrology chart represent different facets of your life, based on the time and location of birth, and show the gifts or obstacles you will face in this lifetime," astrologer [Lisa Stardust](#) tells *Allure*. In other words, if the birth time is incorrect, your entire astrological cosmology will be inaccurate, and that's obviously a bummer.

The Language of the Houses

When you look at your chart for the very first time, it's hard to know exactly where to direct your focus. There are certain areas that are filled with symbols, while others are entirely empty. Which way is up? Which is down? And what do those symbols mean?

To get started, you first need to find your anchor: the **Ascendant**. Also known as the rising sign, the Ascendant is the furthest left point of the central horizon line and quite literally reveals which zodiac sign was emerging from the eastern horizon at your exact moment of birth.



The letters "ASC" (also abbreviated as "AC") mark your ascendant. Getty Images

While the sun **exposes our truth** and the moon **reflects our emotions**, the Ascendant reveals major themes we will encounter throughout our life. For instance, communication will be a central theme in the **life of a Gemini Ascendant**, whereas innovation, progress, and nonconformity will define **an Aquarius Ascendant's** experience. The ascendant also is the "mask" one wears for the world, the image often portrayed through social media.

The Ascendant also reveals the chart's **ruling planet**. Someone with a Sagittarius Ascendant, for instance, is ruled by generous Jupiter, whereas a Pisces Ascendant is living in an empathetic Neptunian world.

We use the Ascendant not only to gauge our individual terrain but also to create the chart's distinctive architecture. Birth charts are read counterclockwise with the Ascendant's horizontal line delineating the **First House**. We follow the sections, or Houses, and on the right side of the horizon line at the **Descendent**, we start to make our way to the top of the chart. Finally, we conclude the cycle with the **Twelfth House**, the section that borders the Ascendant to the north.

Once we identify the way each planet and sign work together, we look to the Houses to discover exactly where that energy is manifesting.

As you trace your birth chart, you may find that you have many planets in certain houses (in fact, four or more planets in a single house is called a **stellium**), while others may be completely empty. That's absolutely normal. The birth chart is simply a snapshot of the sky at your moment of birth, and since most celestial bodies travel in clusters, they often stay close together. While the empty areas don't signify deficiencies, the locations of the planets *do* reveal important information.

Interpreting the Houses in Your Own Birth Chart

After you've anchored yourself at the Ascendant, you can begin to identify which Houses the planets occupy in your birth chart. To begin this process, think of each planet's specific function: For example, **Mercury** is a messenger, **Venus** is a matchmaker, and **Mars** is a warrior. The *way* in which the planet operates, however, is influenced by its zodiac sign. Mercury in serious Capricorn, for instance, will communicate logically and rationally; Venus in elusive Scorpio adores mysterious romance; Mars in protective Cancer tends to have an indirect approach to battle, and so on.

Once we identify the way each planet and sign work together, we look to the Houses to discover exactly *where* that energy is manifesting. Is Venus-Scorpio in the Second House of material objects, which would make an individual especially drawn to financially stable lovers? Or is Venus-Scorpio in the Ninth House of travel, which would signify a penchant for **long-distance romance**? The planets within the Houses reveal the full scope of our experience and the nuances of our personality.



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Although our natal planets in the birth chart remain stationary, the planets in the sky are constantly moving across our different Houses. Each planet has its own orbit, but since we follow the sun's 365-day cycle, we go through a complete solar cycle of all the Houses every year. In other words, everyone will experience the energies of each house throughout their life. Even if you aren't a Cancer, because Cancer is associated with the Fourth House of Home and Family, at some point, these areas of life will command your attention. Now that you understand the importance of the Houses in astrology, let's delve into each one.

Every Astrological House, Explained

The First House of Self

Defined by the Ascendant, the First House defines you. It represents the body you were born with, your physical appearance, and your general temperament. Natal planets that occupy the First House tend to have a very strong influence in that person's life (for instance, Mercury in the First House is a sign of a chatterbox, while the moon in the First House reveals someone who wears emotions on their sleeve). Since this is the first stop in the cycle, when planets in the sky transit into this house, our goals are manifested, and new projects, ideas, or perspectives finally take form. This House corresponds with **Aries energy**.

The Second House of Possessions

The Second House is related to our personal finances, material possessions, and the concept of value. While it does rule money, it also covers our emotions, which live inside of us (and often affect us even more than money does). Natal planets in the Second House tend to seek security through their material world. Planets transiting the Second House reveal changes in resources or self-esteem. This House corresponds with **Taurus energy**.

The Third House of Communication

Communication, transportation, and local community are all governed by the third house. Natal planets in the Third House are motivated by expression and often help guide you to build close relationships with their peers, [including siblings, coworkers, and classmates. Communication is the solution to most problems, and the basis of all **successful relationships**, so make sure to honor and nurture this sector of your chart. When planets transit the Third House, we often receive important information about our immediate network. This House corresponds with **Gemini energy**.

The Fourth House of Home and Family

The Fourth House sits at the base of the chart and symbolizes home and family. Natal planets in the Fourth House reveal an individual's relationship with the maternal figure, as well as their unique outlook on domesticity. Planets moving across the Fourth House often encourage us to invest in our infrastructure by creating more private, nurturing spaces that make us feel safe, loved, and cared for. The Fourth House also rules your relationships with people (and pets) who are family, either blood or chosen. This House corresponds with **Cancer energy**.

The Fifth House of Pleasure

This playful zone of the Fifth house is linked to creativity, romance, and children. Natal planets in the Fifth House are linked to your intrinsic artistic expression, while planets transiting the Fifth House often deliver eureka moments that boost our confidence. The Fifth House is all about what makes you feel good, whether it's **orgasms**, attention, or the fulfilling work of a creative project. This House corresponds with **Leo energy**.



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The Sixth House of Health

The Sixth House corresponds with health, wellness, and daily routines, including odd jobs. Where the body you're born with exists in the First House, the choices made over a lifetime create the body found in your Sixth House. Naturally, our environment and life choices affect our health, such as self-care, having a good work-life balance, and whether you spend enough (or too much!) time in the sun, so let this house remind you to pay attention to your physical and mental well-being. Those with natal planets in this zone are often fueled by organization and structure and tend to focus on time and calendar management. Planets

transiting the Sixth House help us form habits and redefine our schedules. This House corresponds with **Virgo energy**.

The Seventh House of Partnership

The Seventh House (the Descendent) sits directly across from the First House Ascendant and represents life-changing partnerships. Up until now, all the Houses have explored an individual's immediate world: their money, home, and friends. In the Seventh House, however, the concept of perspective is introduced. Simply put, the Seventh House symbolizes your "cosmic plus one," and yes, that refers to romantic partners, as well as other important relationships in your life. Those with natal planets in the Seventh House tend to be very focused on relationships, gravitating towards partnership in all areas of life. Planets moving through the Seventh House help us close deals, securing our bonds by signing contracts, and making things official. This House corresponds with **Libra energy**.

The Eighth House of Sex, Death, and Transformation

What do sex, death, and transformation have to do with one another? Well, they're all animalistic instincts. Those with natal planets in the Eighth House are often attracted to supernatural or occult topics, have intense romances, and will likely go through several fabulous makeovers within their lifetime. The Eighth House reminds us that it's okay to give in to our desires, we're going to die one day after all, but to always be adaptable and ready to let go of the past to make room for the present and future. Planets transiting this area help us understand the underbelly of any situation and serve as a reminder of life's complexities. This House corresponds with **Scorpio energy**.

The Ninth House of Philosophy

Travel, philosophy, and higher education all define the ninth house. In medieval astrology, this region was linked to places and people outside of your village. Now, we interpret this area as both literal and intellectual exploration. Those born with natal planets in the Ninth House are extremely curious and inquisitive, with deep-rooted wanderlust. When planets move across the Ninth House we often begin studying a new topic, move to a foreign location, or adopt a completely different perspective. The Ninth House encourages you to keep an open mind and be willing to learn new things as your world changes and expands. This House corresponds with **Sagittarius energy**.

The Tenth House of Social Status

The Tenth House, located at the very top of the birth chart, is the apex of your unique story, and yes, is basically the House of popularity. The Tenth House also governs public image, professional aspirations, and career achievements. Natal planets in the Tenth House reveal an ambitious individual, and changes in the profession often occur when planets transit this zone. This House corresponds with [Capricorn energy](#).

The Eleventh House of Friendship

As the houses begin their descent, the Eleventh House helps us remember the purpose of our hard work, and with who we share the joy of our accomplishments. The Eleventh House is linked to humanitarian pursuits, as well as our personal network. This covers our [dear friends](#) and support system who help keep us moving forward. Technology and innovation also exist within this zone, so those born with planets in the Eleventh House are often defined by their revolutionary ideas. Transiting planets through this domain help us broaden our reach as we define our role within society. This House corresponds with [Aquarius energy](#).

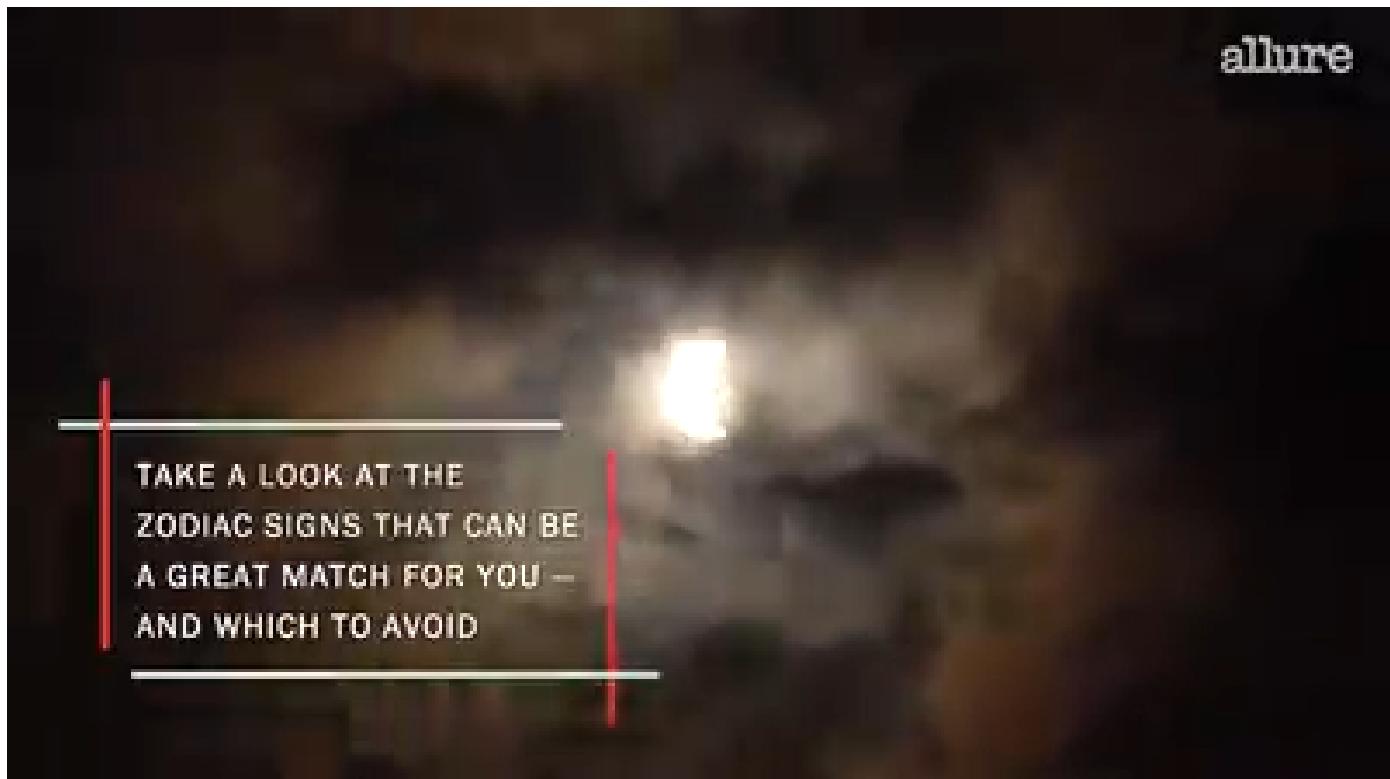
The Twelfth House of the Unconscious

In the sky, the Twelfth House exists just beneath the horizon: It's quite literally the darkness before dawn. Likewise, the Twelfth House is considered the "unseen realm," and governs all things that exist without physical forms, like dreams, secrets, and emotions. Those born with planets in the Twelfth House are often highly intuitive, [perhaps even psychic](#). We attract karmic people into our lives when planets transit the Twelfth House, but during this time, we must also remember that not *all* relationships are meant to last. This House corresponds with [Pisces energy](#).

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- [How the Sun's Position In Your Birth Chart Affects Your Zodiac Sign](#)
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